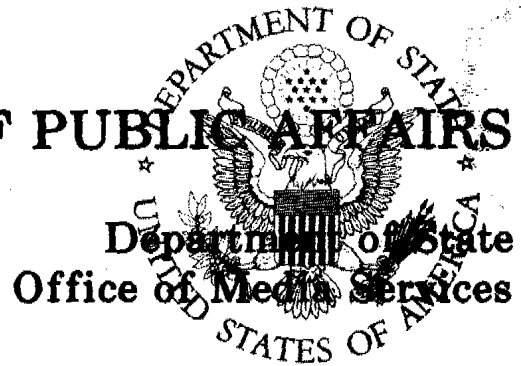


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August 19, 1974

Press Conference:

**SECRETARY KISSINGER DISCUSSES CYPRUS
SITUATION, KILLING OF U.S. AMBASSADOR DAVIES**

Press Conference by Secretary of State
Henry A. Kissinger in the Press Briefing
Room of the Department of State
August 19, 1974.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I would like to begin with a few observations about the tragic death of Ambassador [Rodger P.] Davies.

Ambassador Davies has been a close associate for all the years that I have been in Washington. He worked closely with me on Middle East problems when he was Deputy Assistant Secretary. His performance after he was appointed Ambassador in Cyprus has been outstanding. I think I can do no better than to read to you two cables which I sent to him, one on July 22, the other on August 10.

On July 22 I sent him the following cable:

"I would like to express my thanks for your performance and that of your staff during the last week. I relied heavily on your good judgment and on the excellent reporting from Nicosia. The steadiness and courage displayed by you and your staff under dangerous conditions was exemplary. The Embassy's overall performance deserves the highest commendation. Please convey my congratulations and profound thanks to all members of your staff. Hopefully, and in great measure due to your efforts, the situation will calm in Cyprus."

Then on August 10, I sent him another cable:

"Art Hartman [Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Arthur A. Hartman] has just reported to me in some detail on the magnificent performance of all of you under the most dangerous and trying circumstances. Your courage under fire, your accurate, perceptive, and calm reporting, and your continued efforts to further our policy and protect American citizens with a reduced and over-worked staff are a credit to you and are in the finest tradition of the Service."

My associates will tell you that the highest praise they usually get from me is the absence of criticism. And I want to call your attention to these two cables which express the extraordinary performance of Ambassador Davies. Those of us who have known him will miss him for his outstanding human qualities.

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The Foreign Service, which is often criticized, has produced no better representative. And his work is in the best traditions of a service to which dedication and the performance of a national duty are the principal objectives.

I have sent the following message to Ambassador Davies' children:

"You both have my deepest sympathy in this tragic time. While there is little that anyone can say at a moment such as this to lessen the sorrow, I want you to know that we share your deep sense of loss. Your father was loved, respected, and admired by all of his colleagues in the Foreign Service and the State Department. You should be very proud of him: we are. Mrs. Kissinger and I stand ready to do anything we can to help in the difficult months ahead."

You know that the White House has already announced that the President has ordered that a plane be sent for the children. I have asked our Deputy Under Secretary of State [L. Dean] Brown, whose distinguished service includes service as Ambassador in Jordan, in very difficult circumstances, to go out with this plane, to represent the United States in Cyprus until we can appoint an Ambassador and get him in place. The designation of an officer of the distinction of Ambassador Brown leaves no doubt of the importance we attach to a speedy and peaceful resolution of the Cyprus issue.

This morning also President Clerides called me to express his personal sorrow at the loss of Ambassador Davies, whom he described as a close personal and very trusted friend. I assured President Clerides that the United States fully understood the lack of responsibility of the Cyprus Government for this tragic event. I assured him that the United States would continue a major effort to bring about peace, and he urged us to make such an effort. I emphasized to him, however, that these efforts would not be helped by anti-American demonstrations that were unjustified by the record, and that could only create conditions to hamper these efforts.

I also have had an opportunity this morning to speak with President Ford about the situation in the eastern Mediterranean. We were in close touch by telephone yesterday and we have met personally several times in the preceding days. President Ford has asked me to make the following statement on behalf of the United States:

First, the United States shall insist on the strict maintenance of the cease-fire on Cyprus.

Second, the imperative and urgent need is to begin negotiations.

Third, we will continue to support efforts to bring the parties to the negotiating table.

Fourth, the United States will play any role requested by the parties. We are also prepared to support the able efforts of the British Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, in this regard.

Fifth, in these negotiations, we believe it will be necessary for Turkey, as the stronger power on the ground, to display flexibility and a concern for Greek sensitivities, both in terms of territory and the size of military forces on the island. I have made this point directly this morning to the Prime Minister of Turkey. I have been assured that the Turkish Government considers the demarcation line negotiable, and that it will carry out the provisions of the Geneva Agreement calling for phased reductions of troops on Cyprus.

Sixth, the United States greatly values the traditional friendship of Greece. It has the highest regard for Prime Minister Karamanlis, and wishes every success to his democratic government. We will use our influence in any negotiation to take into full account Greek honor and national dignity. At the same time, we assume that all of our allies, including Greece, join in collective defense in their own interests. We are willing to strengthen these common alliance ties and to help the

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Greek Government in any way possible. We will not be pressured by threat of withdrawal from the [NATO] Alliance, or anti-American demonstrations which in any event are totally unjustified by our record.

I repeat that this statement has been gone over by President Ford.

Q Will we get a copy?

A You will have a copy — I suppose we will have a copy available.

Q May I ask, has the President been in touch with Prime Minister [Bulent] Ecevit?

A I have been in touch with him, and I affirm that the answer is, "Yes."

Q Will you take questions?

A Reluctantly.

Q Last week, one of your associates described as plain "baloney" suggestions that the United States has tilted toward Turkey. Do you share in that view? And can you tell us specifically the consideration that was given to cutting off arms to Turkey and why arms were not cut off during the building crisis?

A With the speaker sitting here and looking balefully at me, my options, as they say, are severely limited.

I completely support the statement of Mr. McCloskey.

The situation on Cyprus tilted toward Turkey, not as a result of American policy, but as a result of the actions of the previous Greek Government which destroyed the balance of forces as it had existed on the island. The United States did not threaten the cut-off of military aid to Turkey for these reasons:

First, it was considered that such an action would be ineffective, and would not prevent the threatening eventuality.

Secondly, as was pointed out in this statement, we are giving economic and military aid as a reflection of our common interest in the defense of the eastern Mediterranean. Once such a decision is taken, it will have the most drastic consequences and not just over a period of time covering a few days, but over an extended period of time.

For all these reasons, it was judged that the United States would be both ineffective and counterproductive to threaten the cut-off of aid.

Short of this, however, we made the most repeated and urgent representations to Turkey in order to prevent the military action that happened. We have criticized the action and we believe also that the inflexibility of all of the parties in Geneva contributed to it.

Q Mr. Secretary, I don't know the exact wording but back here earlier you said, "the United States will play --," this is in the President's statement, "The United States will play any role requested by the parties." Is that correct? You will await some request from them, or do you have any initiatives to take on your own?"

A First of all, I think the exact status of the statement I read is that it is not a statement "by" the President. It is a statement approved and directed by the President -- and I don't know what the distinction is, but generally, Presidential Statements are made at the White House. But the practical consequences are the same because it has been gone over with the President, and he has asked me to make it in his name.

Now, on "Have practical steps been proposed?"

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It is my understanding that the British Government is considering an initiative, which we shall support. We have also made clear to the parties that we are prepared to use any alternative method that promises results.

As you know, during the last week, we offered to all of the parties a more active American role, and it is up to them to avail themselves of it.

We have not yet made any specific proposal as to a particular solution, but you will see in the statement that I have just read our view as to the direction in which the negotiations should go.

Q Can I follow that up, Mr. Secretary? Has there been any request by the parties to get you more personally involved by either going there personally, and what would be the reaction if you were asked?

A There has not been any formal request, and our first effort now is to get the parties to the conference table. We would be prepared to entertain any request that offered a prospect of success.

Q Mr. Secretary, there has been widespread criticism around the world from diplomats as well as from public demonstrators that the United States used "quiet diplomacy" which was so quiet during the past 4 weeks that it was ineffective.

Can you address yourself to whether the United States at an earlier point might have done what it has done today if it had issued a firm, specific statement?

Also, you have been burned in effigy on Lafayette Square, I believe, for the first time.

A Well I am honored -- is it really only the first time? [Laughter]

Q In Lafayette Square, I believe.

A I hope you all realize that half of the demonstrators were State Department employees. [Laughter]

Let us understand the context within which the negotiations have taken place:

Until early August, until, in fact August 8th, it was the general judgment of all those dealing with the negotiations, including specifically that of the United Kingdom, that the conference in Geneva would lead to a settlement and that in fact it would, after an initial phase which would be conducted by Foreign Ministers, break up into working groups that would settle the issue.

Under those circumstances, it would have been highly inappropriate for the United States to make a public statement of the solution that it advocated.

After it became apparent that the negotiations in Geneva were heading for a stalemate, the United States first responded to every request by the principal mediator, the British Foreign Secretary, for specific assistance and specific proposals. In addition, the United States made many demarches to Turkey to prevent the threatened military action. And it [the United States] would have preferred if, perhaps, some more flexibility could have been shown by all of the parties in Geneva. Our judgment was that a public statement would freeze the positions and that it would not achieve the objective of thwarting a military attack.

After the event, it is never possible to prove whether some other course might not have been successful. Our judgment was that under the circumstances, quiet diplomacy would lead to these results. But there is a limit to what diplomacy can achieve. It cannot substitute for an existing relationship of forces.

We understand the frustrations of the Greek community. We understand also the frustrations and disappointments of the Greek Government -- but it is important to remember that the original dislocations were not of our own making and that the United States, while it will try to be helpful, cannot solve all problems around the world.

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With respect to the demonstrations, it is worthwhile to remember that a few years ago the demonstrations were complaining about excessive American involvement. Now the complaint seems to be the opposite.

Q Mr. Secretary, has the perception of the United States as "tilting towards Turkey" regardless of whether it's correct or incorrect in any way hampered your efforts to serve as an effective mediator between the two sides?

A I think that it is understandable that Greek emotions run very deep at this moment. I believe that, upon calmer reflection, the responsible Greek leaders will recognize that the United States has shown deep sympathy for the Greek Government -- that we welcome the present democratic Government in Greece, and that within the limits of what was possible, we have attempted to play a constructive role.

I think the Greek Government will also realize that the United States' roles can be very important in bringing about a result consistent with the dignity and honor of all of the parties -- and we hope it will realize that anti-American demonstrations and anti-American gestures do not contribute to our effectiveness.

Q Mr. Secretary, yesterday Secretary [of Defense James R.] Schlesinger talked about the arms embargo and the continued Turkish advances and it sounded like it was still an active possibility if the Turks continued their military operations on Cyprus. Is it? And at what point do we invoke some form of embargo?

A I do not wish to speak of circumstances that have not arisen. We have been given assurances by the Turkish Government that it would strictly abide by the cease-fire, and these assurances were reiterated in my conversations with Prime Minister Ecevit this morning. I do not want to consider what our point of view would be if it turned out that these assurances weren't correct.

Q Mr. Secretary, on the question about military assistance, please, the Foreign Assistance Act stated --

A Where is the question?

Q I am asking the question from back here. The Foreign Assistance Act states --

A I thought I was looking at Bernie Gwertzman.

Q -- that defense services to any country shall be furnished solely for internal security and for legitimate self-defense. It also states that any country which uses articles which we have given them in substantial violation of the Act shall be immediately ineligible for further assistance. The question that I am asking is whether or not--what your understanding of the legal terms of the Act are -- whether or not we are not required under the terms of the Act to cut military assistance to Turkey?

A Well, I will have to get a legal opinion on that subject, which I have not done. The considerations from a policy point of view that were at the mind of the President and myself have been stated here.

Q In your conversation with the Prime Minister of Turkey today, just to broaden one of your points, do you have the understanding that the one-third of Cyprus which is now under Turkish control can be significantly reduced in size?

A I have the understanding that it can be reduced in size.

Q But not significantly.

A I did not go into that much detail.

Q Mr. Secretary, in view of the crisis in Cyprus, can you assess, or could you reassess, the capability of the United States to stop or limit local wars between smaller states?

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A Well, the United States has never claimed, and could not accept the proposition, that it must stop every local war between smaller states wherever they occur.

Secondly, it is also clear that the United States cannot be asked to redress any upset in any balance regardless of how it has occurred, and where it has occurred, by its own military forces.

We are disappointed by the outcome, by the actions of various of the parties at various times on Cyprus.

We chose -- in order not to internationalize the issues too much -- to support Britain, which had a legal position as a guaranteeing power in its mediating effort. We are prepared to continue to do this, and we are prepared also to make other efforts. I do not think it is fair to generalize from this one event, which had a long and complicated history, on a global basis.

Q Mr. Secretary, earlier you spoke about a new British initiative. Could you give us an idea as to what it would be, what would be the direction of it?

A I saw a ticker before I came here in which this had allegedly been announced by the British Foreign Office, and I do not want to go into the details of it because it has been the subject of confidential discussions over the weekend. I simply wanted to indicate the United States' support for it.

Q Mr. Secretary, on the one hand, just a couple of minutes ago, you did not rule out totally the cutting off, or the possible cutting off, of military aid. You merely said you didn't want to discuss circumstances which have not yet arisen. But, on the other hand, you gave us two very good reasons why the cut-off of military aid would not be effective anyway. Why can you not rule it out?

A The cut-off of military aid was judged not to be effective in the circumstances existing last week. It is a step we would take only in very extreme circumstances which, I repeat, have not arisen, and which I do not foresee. We cannot rule it out for all time, but we do not foresee it, and we are not threatening with it now.

Q Mr. Secretary, what is happening on the negotiations on the [Senator Henry M.] Jackson Amendment? Where does that stand? When do you expect that that will come to a fulfillment?

A As the three Senators said after the meeting with President Ford the other day, we made good progress in the negotiations. We hope that we can make further progress during this week.

Q Mr. Secretary, in your conversations with parties involved in the Cyprus situation, would you be to characterize the situation now as a winding down, or do you expect it to go on indefinitely?

A No, my impression is that the military operations have substantially wound down. It is, of course, a serious problem for Greece whether and under what circumstances it will enter negotiations. We favor early negotiations because we do not believe that the situation will improve. Indeed, the status quo will tend to be confirmed the longer the negotiations are delayed.

I have stated the American position with respect to the negotiations and with respect to the role we would play in a negotiation, and we expect to have clearer responses about that in the next few days.

Q Mr. Secretary, could you explain the American position on the next step in the diplomatic dialogue in the Middle East? Yesterday's U.S.-Jordanian communiqué said that at an appropriately early date there should be a Jordanian-Israeli disengagement agreement. Does this now mean that the United States sees the next step being between Israel and Jordan?

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A First of all, let me say that there are many versions of disengagement schemes between Jordan and Israel, and the United States did not imply by this statement that it backed any particular scheme between Jordan and Israel.

As to which negotiation should be next, I think we cannot decide until the round of discussions is completed, which involves the Foreign Minister of Syria, who is arriving this week; the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, who is arriving next week; and we have also invited the Prime Minister of Israel to come here in the first half of September for discussions with the President. It is only after all of these discussions are completed that we can make a judgment as to what the next move should be.

Q Following up on that, do you expect on your scheduled trip to India to stop off in the Middle East to possibly begin some shuttle diplomacy between Amman and Jerusalem?

A I think that as a general practice a foreign government must not expect that every time there is a crisis the Secretary of State will come rushing into the area and spend all of his time settling that particular crisis. On that basis we could never conduct a consistent American foreign policy. And it cannot become the rule that every issue is settled by the personal shuttle diplomacy of the Secretary of State.

I'm prepared to go to the Middle East for a specific trip. And I may, if there is an especially critical point, engage in a brief shuttle diplomacy. But I do not think it is in the U.S. interests nor in the interests of other countries to expect me personally to settle every issue no matter where it arises.

So we will support further diplomatic moves, but one must not expect the same degree of extended absences from Washington which characterized the last negotiations.

Q Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.